

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (FL-13) announced today that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will reimburse Manatee County for an additional \$1,736,675 in costs associated with the Anna Maria Island beach renourishment project. Buchanan has worked in a bipartisan effort with other members of the Florida delegation to urge the Corp to restore funding appropriated by Congress in 2002 and 2003 and fully reimburse the County for federal costs associated with the 2002 project.

“This was an important hazard mitigation project that has been left to languish for far too long,” added Buchanan. “Manatee County entered into a cooperative agreement with the Corps to protect the shore. For years, the Corp failed to fully reimburse the County for the project’s federal costs. I am pleased that with this payment the Corps has honored its commitment to the County.”

In September of 2000, Manatee County entered into an agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers for construction of the Anna Maria Island beach renourishment project. The federally authorized project began in March of 2002 and was completed in May of that same year.

Congress appropriated \$1 million for the project in fiscal year 2002 and an additional \$3.5 million in 2003. Yet, the county received just \$2,340,599 in reimbursement from the Corps in 2004. The remainder of the funds had been reprogrammed by the Corp for other projects.

As a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee – which has jurisdiction over the USACE – Buchanan has worked tirelessly on behalf of Manatee County. Just last month, Buchanan called on Congress to circumvent USACE and provide direct funding to Manatee County for reimbursement.

The Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, Jane von Hahmann said, "I want to thank Congressman Buchanan and Senators Martinez and Nelson for their assistance in securing these much needed reimbursement funds. This final payment will allow the County to move forward in good faith with the Army Corps and State of Florida as participant partners to address our future beach restoration needs."

“Many communities put their financial security at stake when they undertake important public improvement projects,” added Buchanan. “I am pleased that we were able to cut through the red tape, open the lines of communication and work together to resolve this issue.”